



PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW

DATE: August 9, 2010

FROM: Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner

ADDRESS: 3410 11th Street NW

APPLICATION: Unenclosed sidewalk café for 3 tables and 6 seats

Site Information

Zone: C-2-A

Historic District: No

CFA: No

Neighborhood Character: Neighborhood commercial district

Background:

This application was received by the Office of Planning on August 3, 2010. This café is for an adjacent restaurant.

Relevant Policies of Planning Initiatives

Policy T-2.4.4: Sidewalk Obstructions

Locate sidewalk cafes and other intrusions into the sidewalk so that they do not present impediments to safe and efficient pedestrian passage. Maintain sidewalk surfaces and elevations so that disabled or elderly pedestrians can safely use them. 410.8

Policy UD-3.1.8: Neighborhood Public Space

Provide urban squares, public plazas, and similar areas that stimulate vibrant pedestrian street life and provide a focus for community activities. Encourage the “activation” of such spaces through the design of adjacent structures; for example, through the location of shop entrances, window displays, awnings, and outdoor dining areas.

Policy UD-3.10: Sidewalk Cafes

Discourage the enclosure of sidewalk cafes in manner that effectively transforms them into indoor floor space. The design of sidewalk cafes should be compatible with the architectural qualities of the adjoining buildings, should complement the street environment, and should not impede pedestrian movement.

KEY ISSUES

The property is located in the Columbia Heights neighborhood on 11th Street, NW, between Park Road and Monroe Street, NW. It is located in an area zoned C-2-A. There is a low level of pedestrian activity during working hours and a moderate level of pedestrian activity at other times. This neighborhood is predominantly characterized as mixed use residential with neighborhood serving commercial.

The sidewalk where the sidewalk café is proposed is located along 11th Street and is 19 feet wide. The adjacent business has a 3 foot shop window projection. There are 4 feet at the curb set aside for

tree boxes and other street furniture. This leaves 12 feet to accommodate for pedestrians and café seating. The proposed seating area includes 3 tables and 6 seats in an area that is 104 square feet.

The café area extends into the sidewalk 4'-6"'. This leaves 7'-5"' of unobstructed sidewalk between the café and the 4 foot furniture zone. District regulations require a 10' clear pedestrian path adjacent to a sidewalk café, although the Public Space Committee has the authority to approve an adjacent clear pedestrian path of 6 feet.

The Public Space Committee requires that there be 15 square feet for every seat within a dining area. With an area of 104 square feet, this sidewalk café has enough space for 7 seats; the application is for 6 seats.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Sidewalk cafes are one of the few ways that the District can activate public space in commercial areas. Wherever possible, the Office of Planning supports sidewalk cafes in public space. This application complies with the minimum requirements for sidewalk cafes.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved and that this be placed on the consent agenda.